



## **H.R. 986 - Eightmile Wild and Scenic River Act**

### **Floor Situation**

H.R. 986 is being considered on the floor under a closed rule.

### **The Rule:**

- Provides one hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Committee on Natural Resources.
- Waives all points of order against consideration of the bill except for clauses 9 (earmarks) and 10 (PAYGO) of Rule XXI.
- Provides that the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Natural Resources now printed in the bill, modified by the amendment printed in the Rules Committee report accompanying the resolution, shall be considered adopted.
- Waives all points of order against the bill, as amended, and provides that the bill, as amended, shall be considered as read.
- Provides for one motion to recommit with or without instructions
- Provides that, notwithstanding the operation of the previous question, the Chair may postpone further consideration of the bill to a time designated by the Speaker.

H.R. 986 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative Joe Courtney (D-CT) on February 12, 2007. The bill was referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources and was reported by the Committee on Natural Resources on a party-line vote.

The bill is expected to be considered on the floor of the House on July 30, 2007.

*\*Note – This legislation was considered under suspension of the rules on July 11, 2007. It did not receive the two thirds needed to pass and was defeated 239-173.*

## Summary

This legislation would amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (PL 90-542) to designate certain segments of the Eightmile River in the State of Connecticut as components of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

## Background

In 2001 Congress passed the Eightmile River Wild and Scenic River Study Act of 2001, which authorized the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study as to the feasibility of adding the portions of the Eightmile River to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The report found that the following areas should be added to the Scenic River System:

- The entire 10.8-mile segment of the main stem, starting at its confluence with Lake Hayward Brook to its confluence with the Connecticut River at the mouth of Hamburg Cove.
- The 8.0-mile segment of the East Branch of the Eightmile River starting at Witch Meadow Road to its confluence with the main stem of the Eightmile River.
- The 3.9-mile segment of Harris Brook starting with the confluence of an unnamed stream lying 0.74 miles due east of the intersection of Hartford Road (State Route 85) and Round Hill Road to its confluence with the East Branch of the Eightmile River.
- The 1.9-mile segment of Beaver Brook starting at its confluence with Cedar Pond Brook to its confluence with the main stem of the Eightmile River.
- The 0.7-mile segment of Falls Brook from its confluence with Tisdale Brook to its confluence with the main stem of the Eightmile River at Hamburg Cove.

This would add roughly 25.3 miles to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The above rivers would be managed and conducted as the Secretary of the Interior sees fit according to a management plan developed during the 2001 study of the rivers.

*\*Note – 14 members of the Committee including the Ranking Member Rob Bishop (R-UT) signed onto the dissenting views which stated that, “H.R. 986, as introduced, made a tepid attempt to prohibit condemnation of private property by the National Park Service. Thus, Congressman Rob Bishop proposed an amendment to strengthen the bill, believing it was imperative to have iron-clad property rights protections - especially in the Congressional district where the historic U.S. Supreme Court case Kelo v. City of New London originated.”*

## Cost

According to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) based on information from the National Park Service, CBO estimates that the proposed designation would not significantly affect the agency's administrative or land-management costs, which are subject to appropriation. Enacting H.R. 986 would not affect direct spending or revenues.

**Staff Contact**

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